

A soldier in the 244th Engineer Battalion, Justin's responsibility in Iraq was to seek out and establish temporary operating bases for American forces. This dangerous task often put Justin's detachment, based in Grand Junction, Colorado, in harms way. A few months ago Justin's unit was involved in one harrowing firefight in the City of Samarra where a group of armed insurgents in a car headed straight for our troops. As the insurgent's vehicle passed Justin's position, he shot out the back window before the car careened into an area where the unit was able to effectively contain the situation.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to rise and recognize the actions of Specialist Justin Redifer for his service to our nation. Receiving the Bronze Star is a testament to the bravery and courage Justin displayed while in Iraq. His selfless sacrifice to his country serves as a model for all Americans who desire to serve their country in this war against terror. Many young men and women like Justin are now serving their nation, without regard to personal safety, to ensure the people of Iraq can have the same freedoms we enjoy. On behalf of my fellow Coloradans and Americans, I wish to thank Justin for his bravery and noble service.

HONORING WHITNEY YOUNG HIGH SCHOOL

HON. RAHM EMANUEL

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 21, 2004

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Whitney Young High School of Chicago for its triumphant achievement on winning the first place title in the Illinois Academic Decathlon competition on March 13, 2004.

The Academic Decathlon is a team competition wherein students are tested through a diverse group of scholastic categories including: art, economics, essay interview, language and literature, mathematics, music science, social science and speech.

With up to nine members from each team competing in all ten events of the decathlon and representing a diversity of scholastic aptitude, the true spirit of this year's "America. The Growth of a Nation" theme has been advanced.

The decathlon, which was first created by Dr. Robert Peterson, has helped maximize the learning potential of young minds through competitive challenge. Whitney Young has repeatedly demonstrated its ability to shine among the best and brightest of Chicago's academic community.

As winners of the Illinois Academic Decathlon, Whitney Young High School will go on to represent our city and state in the national meet in Boise, Idaho. Nine of its students will compete in one of the most prestigious high school academic competitions in the United States.

I salute each of our Whitney Young High School Academic Decathlon Winners: Rachel Birkhahn-Romelfanger, Nailah Cash-Obannon, Clare Conroy, Christina Doocy, Sarah Duffy, Ikee Gardner, Lally Gartel, Deana Rutherford, Eleanor Sharp and Margaret Sharp.

Reaching this level of competition is a tremendous achievement and one that deserves special recognition. Indeed, Whitney Young

students set the standard for scholastic excellence that the Academic Decathlon seeks to attain.

Mr. Speaker, I join with all residents of the Fifth Congressional District of Illinois in congratulating Whitney Young High School on its achievement. I wish the Academic Decathlon winners the best of luck at the national competition in Idaho as well as continued success as their education continues. I am very proud of these young and future leaders of tomorrow.

A TRIBUTE TO MAY MARSHBANKS OF LILLINGTON, NC

HON. BOB ETHERIDGE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 21, 2004

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate a public servant of the elderly in North Carolina, May Marshbanks, and her recent acceptance of the George L. Maddox Award. This award honors individuals in North Carolina who have excelled in developing and implementing creative programs for older adults. The award symbolizes years of tireless effort on the part of Miss Marshbanks to provide much needed services to the elderly populace of Harnett County.

May Marshbanks, who is eighty-six years old, has directed the Harnett County aging program for 32 years since the inception of the Harnett County Council on Aging in 1971. This marked a second career for Ms. Marshbanks, who retired as a principal from the Chapel Hill school system and moved back to Harnett County. She has been a passionate advocate for the aging and elderly ever since.

Through her pioneering spirit, Ms. Marshbanks forged a path for the Council to develop into the Harnett County Department on Aging. Today, the Department delivers a number of important programs to the elderly including minor home repair, In-Home Aid, an Elderly Nutrition Program, and the Community Alternatives Program for Disabled Adults. The Department provides legal assistance to seniors. It also offers a transportation program to provide seniors the ability to live independently and to provide them access to medical and social services.

As one colleague stated, "May Marshbanks is the Harnett County Department on Aging. The community sees her and the agency as synonymous." May Marshbanks has connected her life with others through noble causes, and her actions have effected hundreds of lives. She has provided needed services for older adults in Harnett County, informed local government officials of the needs of the elderly, and developed public and private cooperative partnerships among existing agencies and programs. I thank May for her service to the citizens of Harnett County. She truly is a compassionate person who makes good things happen.

AMUSEMENT PARK RIDE CHILD LABOR ACT OF 2004

HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 21, 2004

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce "The Amusement Park Ride Child Labor Act of 2004, an act that directs the Secretary of Labor to prohibit the employment of minors as ride operators. For the sake of both the young employees and the park patrons, who are disproportionately children themselves, the Department of Labor should recognize that operating roller coasters and thrill rides requires split-second judgments that, if mishandled, can injure both the operator and dozens of riders. Let minors take the non-hazardous jobs in our parks—let adults run the rides.

If it were ever wise to allow minors to operate amusement park rides, it is not a safe practice today. Based on the National Electronic Information Surveillance System (NEISS), the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) estimates that, nationwide, 800 employees are injured operating amusement park rides each year. This is in addition to the estimated 6,800–10,700 patrons injured on amusement park rides each year. The potential for dangerous, debilitating and sometimes deadly consequences when persons operating amusement park rides make misjudgments, either in the operation of the ride itself or in the reaction to a situation brought on by rider error or ride malfunction, is very serious.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 114 employees died while attending to amusement and recreation facilities during the 10-year period 1992–2002, and 7 of those fatalities involved children under the age of 18.

During 2001, nonfatal injuries suffered by amusement ride attendants totaled 2,475, and nearly one out of every five injuries was suffered by a child employee.

The fact is that in the past 15 years, the speed and complexity of amusement park rides has risen dramatically. All of the nation's 15 fastest coasters have been built in the last 10 years. But clearly, the margin for error is much narrower for the operator of a ride traveling at 100 mph than on a ride traveling 50 mph. People make mistakes, and the riders often act like children, because they often are children. This situation is dangerously compounded by allowing young teenagers to be put in charge of running these high-tech, high-speed machines.

The following are just a few examples of tragedies involving ride operators under the age of eighteen.

In August 1999, a 16-year-old boy ride attendant died from injuries he suffered at Lake Compounce amusement park in Bristol, Connecticut. The boy was working as a ride attendant on the "Tornado," a spinning ride more commonly known as the "Scrambler." The accident happened when the boy stepped onto the ride before it had come to a complete stop. His legs got caught underneath the ride and he was dragged until the operator activated the emergency stop. The boy was left pinned underneath the ride from the waist down. Firefighters used inflatable devices to lift the ride off of the victim. After the boy was freed, he was transported by helicopter to a